

News Release

Date: February 20, 2013

Contact: Public Affairs Detachment Jacksonville

(904) 270-5325

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant Returns from Caribbean Patrol

After 32-day Caribbean counter-narcotics patrol, Coast Guard Cutter VALIANT returns to Mayport.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — The 80 member crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Valiant, a 210-foot Medium Endurance Cutter homeported in Naval Station Mayport, will return home Wednesday after completing a five-week deployment in support of Joint Inter-Agency Task Force South (JIATF-S).

Valiant joined other surface and air assets from the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, and other foreign and domestic agency partners in Operation Martillo, a counter-narcotics trafficking effort focused on preventing the movement of narcotics from South and Central America to the United States.

While underway, Valiant suffered a major casualty to one of the two ship's service diesel generators. The Engineering Department worked around the clock to ensure the delivery of parts and effect repairs in Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Within a few days, Valiant returned to the patrol area.

On Tuesday, February 19th, Valiant offloaded more than 2,300 lbs of cocaine to Coast Guard Station Miami Beach small boat. Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk and an embarked Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) helicopter, also based in Jacksonville, stopped a go-fast and four suspected smugglers at sea on January 24-25. Valiant transferred the four suspected smugglers several weeks ago to other government agencies for prosecution.

During the patrol, eight Valiant crew members extended their enlistment renewing their commitment to the service and its missions. Commander Stephen V. Burdian, Commanding Officer, also named Petty Officer Second Class Jorge Gomez as Valiant's 2012 Enlisted Person of the Year stating, "He truly embodies the Coast Guard's Core Values of Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty."

Valiant begins three weeks of exercises and training with Afloat Training Group (ATG) Mayport to test the crew's ability to conduct operations and respond to emergencies.

For more information about Valiant, visit <http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/cgcValiant/default.asp>

####